



Sustainability

Existing sustainable practices

1. **Energy tracking** – we measure and record our energy use from all fuel sources (e.g. electricity, natural gas). Tracking helps identify the main uses of energy, record progress over time, and identify areas for improvements;
2. **Electricity** - 100% from renewable sources;
3. **Site** – The website almaasintrahostel.com is powered entirely by wind energy;
4. **Towel reuse** - Towels offered in the double rooms once during the stay and for hire in the dorms;
5. **Linen reuse** – Sheets changed every 7 days;
6. **Recycling**
 - We recycle paper, glass, cardboard, plastics and metals and do compost,
 - Most of our furniture is made from recycled materials, many of them upcycled and others bought and made from/with charitable organizations,
7. **Reusable food service items** – 100% of our crockery and cutlery is reusable. Some of them was bought second hand and from charitable organizations;
8. **Waste**
 - At least 75% of your total waste (measured in volume or weight) diverted away from landfills or waste incinerators (i.e. recycled, reused, or composted);
9. **Guest education**
 - We provide information on our green practices on our site and Facebook, on tours and on the workshops,
 - We have our “RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT - Vision, Mission and Values” document available for guests to see and ask them to help us improve our commitment to run a greener hostel by asking for any questions, comments, tips or ideas.
 - In partnership with “Quercus” (biggest Portuguese environment NGO) a biodiversity-related service, the "Nature Sketching Tour", is offered,
 - In partnership with the Government Institute that runs the Portuguese National Parks (ICNF) we do sections of bird ringing as well as identification of the amphibians that exists in our water tanks,
10. **Energy efficient light bulbs** – 100% of our light bulbs are energy efficient and most of them are leds,
11. **Laundry washer ENERGYSTAR qualified**
12. **Alternative Water Sources** - The water used in the house comes from a mine in the mountain. It is stored in a deposit (for the house) and in huge water tanks (for the gardens).
13. **Water saving shower heads** – 50% (75% till the end of the year) of the shower heads saves around 60% on waters consumptions.

14. Purchases

- We favour the use of local producers with eco certifications when possible:
 - 100% of the milk and cheese from Azores Portugal,
 - Most drinks (except soya milk) from Portuguese producers,
 - 100% Soya and rice milk EU Ecolabel,
 - Some tea with EU Ecolabel,
 - Some coffee with EU Ecolabel,
 - Fruits and vegetable from local producers,
 - Bread from local shop and made in the region,
- Wood products, when not reused, FSC certified;
- Toilet paper 100% recycled, EU Ecolabeled and made in Portugal;
- Paper towels 100% recycled, EU Ecolabeled and made in Portugal;
- Office paper 100% recycled, EU Ecolabeled and FSC certified;
- 100% of our products for facility cleaning, laundry, and dishwashing EU Ecolabeled;
- We favour the use of local charitable organizations as our suppliers:
 - *Pallets used to build furniture* – Bought from Banco Alimentar contra a Fome (www.bancoalimentar.pt) or “Food Bank”,
 - *Beds* – Made out of pallets by “O Companheiro” (www.companheiro.org) - Institution that helps prisoners and ex-prisoners and their families,
 - *Blankets* - bought from Reklusa (reklusa.wordpress.com) which works with women prisoners and ex-prisoners,
 - *Second hand furniture* – Bought from Remar (www.remar.pt) Institution that helps ex-drug addicts,
 - *Jams and jellies* – Bought from “Ajuda de mãe” (<http://www.ajudademaie.pt>) – a charitable organizations that helps single mothers and pregnant women,
 - *Flyers and stationary* – Printed by APPACDM Lisboa (<http://appacdm-lisboa.pt>) Portuguese Association of Parents and Friends of Disabled Citizens of Lisbon,
 - *Fencing, wood and other agricultural and gardening products* - Cooperativa Agrícola de Sintra (<http://coopagricolasintra.cidadevirtual.pt>) is a non-profit Agriculture cooperative,
 - *Supermarket products* - The hostel buys lots of supermarket products from A Luta - Coop. Abastecedora de Produtos Alimentares do Concelho de Cascais C.R.L. (www.aluta.pt) which is a non-profit food cooperative,
 - *Banking* - Crédito Agrícola – COOP.

15. **Toiletries** - 100% bathrooms have refillable dispensers for liquid toiletries;

16. **Leftovers and materials left by guests** – Donated regularly to charitable organizations;

17. **Pest management** - Integrated plan for non-toxic pest control with less reliance on chemical treatment:

- Organic insecticides/ biocides,
- Continuous pest monitoring,
- Containerized baits,
- Gels and/or barriers for pests.

18. **Third party certification - Reports**



- TripAdvisor GreenLeader level Gold;
- Five-Leaf system level five leaf (2012)
- Biodiversity Check - European Business and Biodiversity Campaign's Biodiversity Check provides organizations with an estimate of their impact on biodiversity, with the expectation it will lead to a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity and a healthier relationship between business and biodiversity.

19. Other Initiatives

- One of the garden tanks is in use as a nursery to grow little *Squalius* sp., a fresh water fish of the most threatened family Cyprinidae, to be later released and re-populate Colares river,
- A greenhouse is used as a nursery for endangered species such as "Asplenium hemionitis L." that was found in our garden, *Daphne laureola*, *Pinguicula lusitanica* among others,
- Kitchen Garden – Started the project of organic kitchen garden.
- Bird house was put up (3 more will be put this year) for Paridae to prevent the appearing of the Pine processionary.
- Provided weekends of activities to underprivileged children that are supported by Projeto Rumos of the Associação Conversa Amiga and Academia Johnson. These children spent the weekends camping in Almáa, had an environmental educational activity in Monserrate (one of the Sintra Parks) with the support, made Yoga with our teacher, did a walk on the mountain and had the meals with the collaboration of local entities.

20. Awards nominations

- Staywyse Green Initiative Award
 - Runner up in 2012 and 2013
- World Responsible Tourism Awards 2013 and 2015
 - Longlisted.